

THEY ARE NOT FOOLS.

The Coal Operators of West Virginia Not Ignoramuses

AS THE "REGISTER" TRIES TO SHOW.

Mr. M. Erskine Miller Replies to the Attempt Made by the Wheeling "Register" to Prove That the Coal Operators of the State Are so Ignorant That They Do Not Know What Effect Free Coal Would Have on Their Industry—Facts About Nova Scotia Coal and the Whitney Syndicate.

Thomas P. Gentry's Washington Letter in Manufacturers Record.

The coal operators of West Virginia are in a state of righteous indignation over the attack upon their intelligence contained in the six-column article which appeared in the Wheeling daily Register of February 21.

I have just had an interview concerning the article in question with Mr. M. Erskine Miller, whose views no doubt represent those of nearly every operator in the state—certainly of those whose interests will be affected by free coal. Said Mr. Miller: "This attempt to show that the coal operators are a lot of ignoramuses is calculated to bring upon its authors ridicule rather than the approval and endorsement of well-informed and fair-minded men."

"The coal operators, however," Mr. Miller went on to say, "could well afford to treat with silent contempt the attack upon their intelligence if that was all, because the people of West Virginia know very well that they are not as a class quite so ignorant as the Register makes them out. But that is not all. The article in question, the burden of which is to show that free coal will not hurt West Virginia, is a cunningly devised scheme to misdirect public sentiment and put the coal operators in a false light, to the end that their business may be taken away from them and turned over to the Dominion Coal Company, whose field of operation is in Nova Scotia and whose promoters, calculating that the duty would be removed from coal, organized it expressly to run out our coals from the New England market. The real object of the article is to fill in accomplishing what the Dominion Coal Company is fighting for, and the method pursued is one that is likely to excite more or less suspicion, unless the public is prepared to admit that two hundred or more operators in Virginia and West Virginia are, as the Register claims, too deeply steeped in ignorance to know what will be the effect on their own business of a removal of this duty."

"This attack," he declared, "upon the intelligence of the coal operators and attempt to destroy their business, and to take the bread out of the mouths of West Virginia miners, starts out by admitting that, with few exceptions, the deluded operators are opposed to free coal, and that many of those among them who are Democrats have resolved to forsake that party in the event that coal be placed upon the free list. Listen to the conciliatory tone it adopts to make the ignorant, erring Democrats feel that they may yet hope to be forgiven."

"Men who have tens and hundreds of thousands of dollars," Mr. Miller read from the article alluded to, "are not to be blamed for using all the means at their command to preserve their capital from losses. They would not be considered business men if they did not." And here I would ask the Register, if free coal will not hurt, how can there be any losses? "When party principle conflicts with personal gain or business interests, the Register proceeds to admit, 'the former is quickly deserted, and, under the general rule that every man must look after himself or he will not be looked after, such action is not entirely blameworthy.'"

"Following the foregoing apology for those who are asking and needing no apology comes the remarkable discovery that all business fears and apprehensions are due to ignorance. This extraordinary theory is reminiscent of the opinion of Napoleon Bonaparte, who once declared that fear was the result of wisdom rather than ignorance. But let us read on from the Register:

"But as fear is almost always caused by ignorance, so in the case of the coal schedule the fear of free coal manifested by many West Virginia operators has been caused in a large measure, if not entirely, by lack of information as to the real situation or by misrepresentations made by Republican partisans or those persons who might reap a benefit from a retention of the duty on coal."

"However," Mr. Miller here suggested, "if free coal will not hurt West Virginia, as the Register devotes six of its good columns of bad matter to the attempt to prove, then how can there be anyone who can reap a benefit from a retention of the duty? Consistency, thou art a jewel, a veritable electric light to illumine the benighted intellects of the West Virginia operators."

Mr. Miller then read from the Register as follows:

"From the results of the Register's investigations, which are here given for the perusal of the public, it will be seen that such fear on the part of West Virginia coal operators has been absolutely groundless; that Nova Scotia does not now and never can compete with the coal from our state, and that, instead of being injured by a reduction of tariff duties, our coal business will actually be benefited; so that life-long Democrats who have been warring in their belief may return to their party with a lively faith in its doctrines and principles, and with the assurance that their business will be as safe in the hands of the Democracy as it has ever been, and that the Wilson bill, against which they have been induced to protest, is as favorable to the coal industry of our state as any measure which could be enacted at the present time."

"Alas, for the besotted ignorance of the coal men of West Virginia!"

"The Register next proceeds, with an impertinence in sharp contrast with its conciliatory invitations to the erring coal men to return to the Democratic fold, to finish its lecture by an array of figures which are for the most part misleading and fallacious, and of oracular utterances by two or three infallible wise coal operators, the light of whose wisdom is lifted like the brazen serpent in the wilderness of ignorance."

"As to its figures, the cost of Cape Breton coal, run of mine, is given at \$1.80; of Pictou, run of mine, Acadia, \$2.25; Drummond, \$2.00; Spring Hill, run of mine, \$2.50. The Register argues

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"MOTHER'S FRIEND" is the greatest blessing ever offered child-bearing women. I have been a mother for many years, and in each case when "Mother's Friend" has been used, it has accomplished wonders and relieved much suffering. It is the best remedy for relief of the breast known, and worth the price of the article.

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that at these prices Nova Scotia coals cannot compete in New England with West Virginia coals.

"As it happens, however, I hold in my hand a recent report of the Dominion Coal Co., which now controls, by ownership or option, the principal coal mines in Nova Scotia, including those mentioned above, in which the cost of mining and laying down f. o. b. for shipment to New England is given at \$1.14 per ton, which includes the royalty of twelve and one-half cents paid to the British Crown and all railroad charges. Thus the Register's figures are, on an average, more than \$1.00 a ton out of line. But more of this anon."

"To bolster up its work in behalf of those who desire to rob Maryland and the Virginia of the New England market, the Register has interviews with D. C. Boyle and Capt. W. N. Page. The latter's company has a contract to supply the locomotives of the Chesapeake & Ohio railway, and is therefore 'fixed,' tariff or no tariff. The views of these gentlemen, who are, as I understand, out-and-out free-traders, imbued with theoretical vagaries, fill about three columns, with conclusions based upon the misleading figures given above. A large part of Mr. Boyle's interview is devoted to an argument in favor of free ore, so that the iron industries may be transferred from the interior to the seaboard, and thus to provide a market in America for foreign ores to the exclusion of American ores."

"The only argument made by Captain Page in favor of free coal, except such as are based on false premises as to cost of mining, etc., in Nova Scotia, is one predicated upon an exploded theory, namely, that the removal of Canadian duties on our coal will follow the free-coal feature of the Wilson bill. There is no earthly reason to expect Canada to admit American coal free. As a matter of fact, the removal of the Canadian duty will not increase in our shipments to Ontario, because the Canadians are already buying all the American coal they can consume, and would, therefore, not be likely to buy any more, even if the Canadian duty on coal should be removed. The reason they buy coal from the United States is that the cost of the coal and transportation is less from the United States than it would be from Nova Scotia, and this difference is one of transportation entirely."

"The third witness brought on the stand by the Wheeling Register to convict the rest of the West Virginia coal operators of grossing, groveling ignorance is Mr. Evan Powell, manager of an English company—gentleman bred and born in England, with free trade education from infancy, and in no sense an American. He is not regarded as a practical coal operator, nor is he supposed to be well informed as to the needs of this country."

"Thus we have more than six columns of erroneous figures and allegations, and arguments based on false premises, in a great daily paper presumably devoted to the interests of the state of West Virginia. The only effect of this will be to temporarily mislead and deceive the people. The attack upon the intelligence of the coal operators of West Virginia in order to have any effect would require a far larger array of witnesses than the Register has produced, especially in view of the fact that the operators of Kentucky and Tennessee had on the very day preceding the Register's article passed a resolution and memorial to the United States senate endorsing the soundness of the position taken by their brethren in the two Virginias. I should say that, according to the Register, the coal men of Tennessee and Kentucky are also fools."

"All the world knows," Mr. Miller continued, "that the Dominion Coal Company is making a desperate fight to capture the coal business of New England, and thereby deprive the two Virginias of a business which now amounts to millions of dollars annually."

"Taking up the annual report of the Dominion Coal Company, limited, for the year 1893, Mr. Miller gave the gist of its contents as follows:

"This company's coal was sold at prices yielding on the average \$1.423 per ton, and after paying all commercial expenses in marketing it yielded a net profit of twenty-seven and seven-tenths cents per ton, and in addition, steamships, barges and railways owned by the company and used in its coal operations, the splendid profit of \$103,267 65. From coal sold and profits from transportation the company's gross earnings were last year, 1893, \$334,430 00 on an output of \$34,019 tons of coal. How delighted a West Virginia operator would be with such profits! From this they deduct \$87,721 22 for new machinery and wear and tear of plant. Next they deduct \$194,741 96 for dividends, interest on bonds and sinking funds, leaving a net profit for the future needs of the treasury of \$51,977 48."

"Can any man," Mr. Miller asked, "reconcile himself to an acceptance of the theory that Nova Scotia coals, if admitted free of duty or at less than from sixty to seventy-five cents, will fail to hurt the steam coal interests of the Appalachian regions? If so he must be ignorant indeed."

"If further evidence be needed it is furnished in the following extracts from the prospectus of the Dominion Coal company:

Mr. Irvine A. Stearns, manager of the coal companies of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, visited Cape Breton and made an examination of the properties, rendering his report on September 20, 1892. Mr. Stearns stated in his report:

"The developments made show that the different seams are remarkably uniform in thickness and quality and unusually free from faults and disturbances of any kind, and are also very free from gas and water, both of which are very important factors in the cost of mining."

"If the mines were worked steadily the average cost of mining of all the collieries referred to, exclusive of royalty and new improvements, should not exceed eighty cents per ton, and by the use of coal-lifting machinery could be still further reduced."

"The different mines and colliery plants are, as a whole, in good condition."

"If the different operations were consolidated considerable saving could be effected in various ways."

"A very important advantage in such a consolidation would be in opening new collieries, which could be located with a view to mining the greatest amount of coal with the smallest expenditure of money, thereby enabling one plant to do the work which, with different interests as at present, would require two or more."

E. Giffin, Jr., inspector of mines of Nova Scotia, states the amount of available coal on these various properties as over 750,000,000 tons."

"Note the difference between the foregoing expert report and the following taken from the Register:

Mr. Inghel, the mining engineer of the survey, gives much interesting information regarding the methods employed in the mines. In the United States fully 70 per cent of all the coal mines are developed by drifts, the cheapest of all methods. There are few shafts and those not deep, and not very many slope mines. In Nova Scotia the mines are nearly all shaft mines, from 250 to 1,700 feet under the surface. Most of the important veins pitch from twenty to forty-five degrees. Nearly all are run mines, in which the coal is raised by a system of pulleys and employed and expensive devices made use of to provide against fire."

"Here is another interesting extract from the prospectus of the Dominion Coal Company, Limited:

Should the United States duty of 75 cents per ton be required it seems evident that this company will find a large market on the New England seaboard, for which its position at the water would enable it to compete on advantageous terms."

It is estimated that it could put coal f. o. b. vessel at Longburg for about \$1 a ton, probably cheaper than coal is shipped at any port in the world."

The accountant's statement shows that the companies whose books he examined have been making during the past five years an average profit of about 10 cents per ton on their output, not including various sources of revenue, such as profits of the company stores, revenue from railroads outside of coal traffic and profits of the steamship company. This profit per ton should

be considerably increased by consolidation, but even this as a basis shows an annual profit for the companies of about \$2,000,000 on the output of all the mines except the one above mentioned, operated individually, of about \$100,000.

"However, if the Register and the authorities it quotes should apprise the directors of the Dominion Coal Company of what a miserable investment they have made they may be persuaded to quit at once and to cease to waste their time and money. As charitably disposed volunteers of advice to the misguided, it would be only consistent in them to hasten to pull the wool from the eyes of the deluded investors. It is true that New England men of means are proverbially sagacious and prudent in investigating costly properties and in ascertaining suitability of commodities for desired markets; nevertheless, if they can be made to know all that the Register and its witnesses can tell them, they may yet be saved from great loss and deep disappointment."

I think Mr. Miller has proven that the real ignoramuses are not the coal operators of West Virginia, but those who have asserted that free coal will not hurt or harm the business of those operators.

CIGARMAKERS IN ARMS.

They are Vigorously Protesting Against the Wilson Bill's Tobacco Schedule.

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 11.—A delegation from the Cigarmaker's International Union is at the capital to endeavor to induce Congress to change its mind regarding the duty placed on cigars by the Wilson bill. The delegates are James Wood, of New York, John F. Schreck, of Pennsylvania, and John J. Lynch, of Chicago, from a union of 30,000 workmen. They assert that it will be impossible for Americans to compete with foreign workers in any but the cheapest grades of cigars, selling at retail for five cents and less, under the Wilson bill rates. The ways and means committee of the house reduced the tariff on cigars from \$1.50 per pound and 25 per cent ad valorem to \$1 per pound.

The Senate Finance Committee went further by increasing the internal revenue tax from \$3 to \$5. The cigarmakers say that reductions in tariff or increases in internal revenue rates, increasing the advantage of the foreign manufacturer, have resulted in corresponding reductions in the wages of the laboring man. They are doing personal work with the Senate Committee so far as they are able, and Representative McGinn, the Chairman of the Committee on Labor, has promised to make a fight for them when the bill comes back to the house.

FACTORY GIRLS

Will Plead With Congress Not to Pass the Wilson Bill.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., March 11.—Under the leadership of Mrs. J. Ellen Foster, a delegation of New England girls will appear before the United States senate to protest against the passage of the Wilson bill.

Mrs. Foster has been visiting the leading industrial establishments particularly affected by the McKinley and Wilson tariff bills and securing data. From a number of these establishments Mrs. Foster has also selected an intelligent and pretty girl or two, and she proposes to also present before the senators, so that they may tell how industrial life in New England has been affected by tariff agitation.

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Three days is a very short time in which to cure a bad case of rheumatism; but it can be done, if the proper treatment is adopted, as will be seen by the following from James Lambert, of New Brunswick, Ill.: "I was badly afflicted with rheumatism in the hips and legs, when I bought a bottle of Chamberlain's Pain Balm. It cured me in three days. I am all right to-day, and would insist on every one who is afflicted with that terrible disease to use Chamberlain's Pain Balm and get well at once."

New York state has a greater population than all of Canada.

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The best salve in the world for cuts, bruises, sores, ulcers, salt rheum, fever sores, tetter, chapped hands, chilblains, corns, and all skin eruptions, and positively cures piles, or no pay required. It is guaranteed to give perfect satisfaction or money refunded. Price 25 cents per box. For sale by Logan Drug Company.

Time is worth everything. Delays are dangerous. No one can afford to run the risk of allowing a cough to develop into Pneumonia, which is nearly always fatal. Cough Cure is the only remedy that can be relied on to give quick relief and cure the cold.

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Its excellence is due to its presenting in the form most acceptable and pleasant to the taste, the refreshing and truly beneficial properties of a perfect laxative; effectually cleansing the system, dispelling colds, headaches and fevers and permanently curing constipation. It has given satisfaction to millions and met with the approval of the medical profession, because it acts on the Kidneys, Liver and Bowels without weakening them and it is perfectly free from every objectionable substance.

Syrup of Figs is for sale by all druggists in 50c and \$1 bottles, but it is manufactured by the California Fig Syrup Co. only, whose name is printed on every package, also the name, Syrup of Figs, and being well informed, you will not accept any substitute if offered.

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